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2300 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0542
(202) 225-6181

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Congress of the United States

San Bernadino, CA 2/22/00

Exhibit 1-7

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-0542

Baca, Joe
Ctuned in to Court
Reporter

1 | I would first like to thank all of you for coming out today to
show that you care about your community and its future. I
would also like to thank the Department of Energy for
giving us the opportunity to express our views on such an
important issue. | This issue is not about Democrats or
Republicans, but about taking care of humanity. When
2... making difficult decisions, | Congress must not place the
safety of the American people at risk in order to accomplish
its agenda. | So today, I stand before you, not as your United
States Representative, but as a concerned parent and
resident.

...2 | Congress has struggled for six years over what to do with
the more than 70,000 tons of used reactor fuel sitting at
commercial power plants. One main concern remains the
risk of transporting this highly radioactive spent fuel from
our nation's nuclear power plants to a central storage site or
permanent underground repository in Nevada. |

Current estimates are that transportation of spent fuel to
Yucca Mountain will involve 100,000 truck and rail
shipments over a 30-year period. Such shipments will go
through 43 states and occur within a half-mile of 50 million
residents. Current estimates are that 210 – 354 accidents
can be expected during these shipments with a percentage
of those accidents reaching the highest levels of radiation
exposure. We should not stand by and allow this to happen
to our communities and our children.

3 The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is still in the process of finalizing the transportation routes, however, the likeliest routes will truck much of California's radioactive waste along Interstate 15 and along train tracks straight through the San Bernardino County. I am in the process of finding an alternative solution to this dilemma. Other counties have successfully avoided major urban districts so I believe we can do the same.

4 The controversy of such transportation has focused on the adequacy of Nuclear Regulatory Commission standards for shipping casks, the potential consequences of transportation accidents, and the routes that nuclear waste shipments are
5 to follow. It has been said that used fuel is so dangerous that the nuclear plants must isolate the fuel from human contact for 10,000 years. So why would we run the risk of shipping it through our backyards without the proper scientific research and before we have weighed all our options.

6... Nuclear utilities, state utility regulators, and other groups have been urging Congress to establish an interim storage facility at Yucca Mountain to begin receiving nuclear waste much sooner than currently planned. Such actions, without proper scientific research, would be detrimental to communities across this country. If we look at current situations happening at power plants today, there are many solutions to this dilemma.

Recently, the San Onofre Nuclear Power Plant has shut down one of its reactors and intends to store its spent fuel

...6 | rods on site for the next decade. This is one of the many
options that must be weighed prior to making any decisions
that would have a major impact on our community.

7 | Congress has spent billions of dollars on the Yucca
Mountain storage site and it is still unknown whether this
site is environmentally sound or not. Why should our tax
dollars be spent and our health be put at risk without
8 | finding out all aspects of this issue. Scientific studies show
that transporting such material has potential risks that could
end in catastrophic disasters and yet no other option has
been proposed. |

This is why I am here today, to ensure the security of our
community. Nuclear waste is a serious issue that must be
handled very carefully and thoroughly. I am committed to
protecting the health and environment of the 42nd district of
California along with all the districts in the United States.